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## THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING,  
CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 28 TO 30, 1912

The second annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English was held at the Auditorium Hotel in Chicago on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Thanksgiving week. The Executive Committee came together on Thursday afternoon and the Board of Directors on Thursday evening. General sessions were held on Friday forenoon and Saturday forenoon, section meetings on Friday afternoon, the annual dinner on Friday evening, and after the dinner a special session of delegates and a meeting of the new Board of Directors.

### BUSINESS

The annual business meeting was held on Friday afternoon at 4:30 in the South Banquet Room. The nominating committee reported that the policy of rotation in office had been applied to the Board of Directors, with the exception of Mr. Hopkins, who has two more years to serve on the Executive Committee. The following were proposed as directors for three years in accordance with Article III of the constitution: Franklin T. Baker, professor of English, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City; Laura Benedict, teacher of English, Burlington High School, Burlington, Ia.; W. J. S. Bryan, superintendent of high schools, St. Louis, Mo.; Archie J. Cloud, deputy superintendent of schools, San Francisco, Cal.; Adah A. Grandy, teacher of English, Deerfield Township High School, Highland Park, Ill.; Edwin M. Hopkins, professor of rhetoric and English language, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan.; May McKittrick, assistant principal, East Technical High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Edwin Mims, professor of English, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.; Ernest C. Noyes, teacher of English, Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Elmer W. Smith, professor of rhetoric and public speaking, Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y. It was voted to instruct the Secretary to cast the ballot of the association for these persons as directors.

Three amendments to the constitution, which had been duly announced, were disposed of as follows. It was moved and seconded that the name of the society be changed to National English Council.

After some discussion, the motion was laid on the table. It was moved and seconded that the fourth paragraph of Article VI be amended to read December 1. The motion was carried. It was moved and seconded that the constitution be so amended as to include the Treasurer in the Executive Committee. This also was carried.

Professor Barnes, of De Pauw University, then moved that, in view of the importance of the matter to teachers of English, the Committee on Grammatical Terminology be instructed to invite the other committees in the country which are working upon the problem of standardizing grammatical terms to unite with the committee of the National Council of Teachers of English. The motion was seconded and, after some objections had been answered, was carried.

The consideration of business was resumed on Saturday morning. Mr. Gaston, of New York, presented the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the National Council of Teachers of English direct the Committee on Grammatical Terminology to continue its work of preparing a list of grammatical terms in accordance with the principles of necessity, scholarly accuracy, and economy.

*Resolved*, That three members of the committee be designated to confer with a like number of the Committee of Fifteen.

*Resolved*, That the joint committee be requested to submit to the National Council at its next annual meeting a list of the grammatical terms agreed upon by the committee.

A point of order to the effect that the passage of these resolutions would require the rescinding of the motion already passed was declared well taken, whereupon Mr. Gaston moved to rescind. This motion being seconded and carried, the resolutions were put upon their passage and were carried by a vote of 23 for, to 5 against, many of those present refraining from voting.

Mr. Miller of Detroit, chairman of the Auditing Committee, then reported that the books of the Treasurer had been examined and had been found correct. The report was accepted.

It was announced that the Board of Directors, in accordance with the constitution, had elected officers for the ensuing year as follows: President, Fred N. Scott, professor of rhetoric, University of Michigan; First Vice-President, Grace M. Shepherd, state superintendent of public instruction, Boise, Idaho; Second Vice-President, Ernest C. Noyes, teacher of English, Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Secretary, James Fleming Hosic, professor of English, Chicago Teachers College; Treasurer, Harry K. Bassett, assistant professor of English,

University of Wisconsin; Member of the Executive Committee, Adah A. Grandy, teacher of English, Deerfield Township High School, Highland Park, Ill.

J. S. McCowan, principal of the high school, Sioux City, Ia., offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the National Council of Teachers of English extend a hearty vote of thanks and appreciation to those who have participated in the program, for the very valuable information which has been collected and presented to the Council for its consideration; to the local committee for the very cordial reception and excellent arrangements made for the members of the Council; to the officers, especially the indefatigable secretary, for the labors which have made the National Council of Teachers of English so great a success.

The resolution was adopted.

#### THE PROGRAM

##### GENERAL SESSION, FRIDAY FORENOON, NOVEMBER 29

The Council was called to order in the South Banquet Room by the president, Fred N. Scott of the University of Michigan, who proceeded to read the annual address, on the topic, "Our Problems."<sup>1</sup> He confined his attention to two matters of current interest, namely, the measurement of composition and the use of contemporary literature.

The second speaker was Gertrude Buck, of Vassar College, chairman of the Committee on Grammatical Terminology, who presented a preliminary report, entitled, "Some Fundamental Considerations in Planning the Revision of Grammatical Terminology."<sup>2</sup> The principles emphasized were necessity, scholarly accuracy, and economy.

The discussion of the report was opened by C. R. Rounds, of West Division High School, Milwaukee, Wis., a member of the committee and also of the joint committee which is composed of representatives of the American Philological Association, the Modern Language Association, and the National Education Association. Mr. Rounds explained his connection with the movement for revision, of which he was one of the originators, and urged that all steps toward establishing a standard nomenclature be taken with the needs of young and inexperienced elementary teachers in the common schools clearly in mind. He called attention to the danger of loading English grammar with terms applicable to languages like Latin and Greek but not to our own.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 1 of this issue.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 11 of this issue.

Continuing the discussion, Charles A. Gaston, of the Richmond Hill High School, New York City, also a member of the committee, recited the experience of the New York committee and urged that the Council hasten to adopt a set of standard terms. W. H. Wilcox, of Baltimore, suggested that what we need is more accuracy and expressiveness rather than uniformity in terminology. Thomas C. Blaisdell, president of Alma College, reminded the Council that, during the last ten years, two or three particular grammars have been widely used in the training of teachers and that the widespread use of certain terms must, therefore, be reckoned with. Herbert Miller, of the Crane High School, Chicago, declared that the terms in use are historic and should not be tampered with. To this, Professor Noble, of Iowa College, replied that history presents constant change in the use of terms; names are continually being overthrown. J. S. McCowan, principal of the high school at Sioux City, Ia., cited numerous examples to show the need of standardization. The debate was concluded by Edwin Lewis, of Lewis Institute, Chicago, with a brilliant and witty speech, in which he demolished the arguments of the objectors and strongly supported the movement for revision.

At this point the chairman appointed a committee to nominate members to fill the vacancies on the Board of Directors, with instructions to report at the business meeting at half-past four. The committee consisted of John M. Clapp, Lake Forest College, chairman, V. C. Coulter, of Warrensburg Normal School, and Charles S. Thomas, of Newton High School, Newtonville, Mass.

The last paper of the morning was presented by Percy H. Boynton, of the University of Chicago, on the topic, "Sorting College Freshmen." This was an exposition of the method by which students entering the University are divided into three groups according to the ability to write which they disclose. One group is required to take preparatory work and another is given advanced standing.

This paper was discussed by John M. Crowe, of the University High School, who, on the basis of his experience in dealing with preparatory groups recruited from various sources, declared that, generally speaking, secondary work in English is fairly well done. The chairman supported this view. Joseph V. Denney, of Ohio State University, advocated withholding final pass marks in English until the day of graduation.

## SECTION MEETINGS, FRIDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 29

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SECTION

*Chairman*, Franklin T. Baker, Teachers College, New York; *Secretary*, Lucy M. Doyle, Parker Practice School, Chicago.

The first speaker before the Elementary Section was James H. Harris, superintendent of schools, Dubuque, Ia., who read a paper on the "Compositional Interests of Seventh- and Eighth-Grade Children."<sup>1</sup> In introducing the speaker Professor Baker commented upon the remarkable increase of interest in composition teaching now everywhere manifest and upon the attempts of educators to arrive at measures of value by means of scientific experiment. These tend to put English teaching upon an exact, scientific basis, they give added dignity to the subject, and they often tend to confirm the teacher's judgment, which has been hitherto mainly intuitive. In discussion Orville T. Bright, district superintendent of schools, Chicago, suggested that there is excess of written work, which entails a great burden upon the teacher. He would have the papers of children brief, crisp, and to the point; he would let the children share in the work of correction; and he would cause the papers to be preserved in loose-leaf notebooks so that errors may be kept in mind and avoided.

The next paper, by Isabel McKinney of the Charleston Normal School, on "English Composition in the Upper Elementary Grades," carried the discussion farther. She advocated working for the three C's, conviction, curiosity, and courage. She would demand good work and accept nothing less. The chairman remarked that teachers are themselves to blame for patiently assuming such a tremendous burden of written work. The public should be awakened to the needs of the English department.

The general theme was further developed by two other papers, that by Lemuel R. Brown, of the Cleveland Normal School, on "Some Needed Readjustments in the Teaching of English Grammar," and that by Walter Barnes, of Glenville (W.Va.) Normal School, on "The Reign of Red Ink." These, together with Miss McKinney's, will appear in the *English Journal* in due course.

## SECONDARY SCHOOL SECTION

*Chairman*, Louise B. Stickney, Yeatman High School, St. Louis; *Secretary*, W. Wilbur Hatfield, Parker High School, Chicago.

The program of the Secondary Section was as follows: "A List of Books for Home Reading," by Herbert Bates, of the Manual Training

<sup>1</sup> See p. 34 of this issue.

High School, Brooklyn, N.Y., chairman of the committee; "The Use of Modern Literature in the High School," Mary D. Spalding, Soldan High School, St. Louis; "A High-School Course in Drama," by Allan Abbott, of Horace Mann School, New York; "What High-School Graduates Think of Their Training in English," by W. Wilbur Hatfield, of the Parker High School, Chicago, chairman of the committee; "Business English in the High School," by Marion Lyons, of the Wendell Phillips High School, Chicago; "A Loose-Leaf Textbook in English Literature," by Caroline E. Britten, of the high school at Jackson, Mich.

In the absence of Mr. Bates, his paper was read by Harry K. Bassett, of the University of Wisconsin. The printed lists were delayed in transit through no fault of the committee, and announcement was later made that they would be distributed by mail. Mr. Abbott's paper was read by title and will appear in the *Journal*. Mr. Hatfield gave, in addition to his own results, those obtained by Dr. Munroe in New York.

In the course of the discussion Mr. Bassett pointed out that by "modern" we do not necessarily mean contemporary literature. Neither are we confined to the popular books and magazines. The *Atlantic Monthly* is available as well as the *Saturday Evening Post*. We cannot afford to overlook the possibility of reaching the real feelings of the pupils by means of the study of the books they will naturally read, and it is possible to lead on to the classics by means of them.

Charles A. Dawson, of the high school at Syracuse, New York, emphasized the value of current literature in the English class and said that in his school several magazines are provided for the purpose. He also urged that the Council consider at a future meeting the possibilities of the teaching of argumentation through such live issues as arise in the business English and in the discussion of current events.

Avery W. Skinner, senior inspector in English for the state of New York, said that there is little difference between "business English" and other English except in the emphasis put upon the commercial phase of composition. All high-school courses in composition should contain somewhat of business correspondence, while "business English" must not fail to be good English. He also pointed out that the opinions of graduates of the schools of New York City must not be regarded as necessarily typical of the state. A large percentage of the people of New York are foreign or of foreign parentage, and their needs are probably not identical with those of the people in other parts of the state.

Others who spoke were J. S. McCowan, of Sioux City, Ia., A. E. Minard, of the Agricultural College of North Dakota, Minnie Porter, of Emporia, Kan., and E. H. Kemper McComb, of Indianapolis, Ind.

The section voted to prefer a request to the Executive Committee of the Council that the Committee on Home Reading be continued with instructions to revise their list in the light of such criticism as may be made, and to make a final report at the next annual meeting.

#### COLLEGE SECTION

*Chairman*, Arthur C. L. Brown, Northwestern University; *Secretary*, Edwin H. Lewis, Lewis Institute, Chicago.

The first paper was read by John M. Clapp, of Lake Forest College, on "Oral English in the College Course." This was discussed by Joseph V. Denney, of Ohio State University, and Raymond M. Alden, of the University of Illinois. The paper and the discussions will be found elsewhere in these columns.<sup>1</sup> Professor Barnes, of De Pauw University, inquired whether the colleges are encouraging the "College Forum." In response to the chairman's request for a show of hands, fifteen hands were raised. Professor Clapp said that in some places volunteer associations work well, but are liable to fluctuation; that there is large opportunity for the small group, say of ten men, who board together and make a point of discussion.

The second paper of the afternoon was by C. N. Greenough, of Harvard University, on "The Preparation of College Teachers of Composition." In the absence of the author, the paper was read by George M. Miller, of the University of Cincinnati. This paper and the general topic of the preparation of college teachers of English were discussed at some length by Professor Alden and by M. Lyle Spencer of Lawrence College; also, more briefly, by Professor Lewis and Professor Miller. Professor Alden's remarks will form the basis of a paper soon to appear. The paper of Professor Greenough will be printed in the next number of the *Journal*.

#### NORMAL SCHOOL SECTION

*Chairman*, Alma Blount, State Normal College, Ypsilanti, Mich.; *Secretary*, V. C. Coulter, State Normal School, Warrensburg, Mo.

The Normal School Section considered a single topic, namely, "What Work in English Should the Normal School Require of Graduates of High Schools Who Are Preparing to Teach in the Elementary Schools?" The chairman presented a report based upon an examination of the catalogues of the normal schools throughout the country. A number

<sup>1</sup> See p. 18.



of short papers and discussions followed, in which the present practice was further explained and criticized and suggestions for improvement offered. The speakers were Samuel A. Lynch, of the State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Ia., Ida S. Simonson, of the Northern Illinois Normal School, De Kalb, Ill., William B. Owen, principal of the Chicago Normal School, S. Chester Parker, dean of the College of Education, University of Chicago, and Lemuel A. Pittenger, critic in English, School of Education, Indiana University.

#### PUBLIC SPEAKING SECTION

*Chairman*, Elmer W. Smith, Colgate University; *Secretary*, Alda M. Stephens, Englewood High School, Chicago.

Before announcing the program the chairman introduced Harry B. Gough, of De Pauw University, who gave a report of the recent meeting of the Public Speaking Conference of Ohio Colleges. The attention of this conference was directed mainly to the standardization of courses in public speaking and to the preparation of college teachers of the subject. Advanced ground was taken with regard to both. Professor Gough remarked that the Ohio conference was the first public speaking society to unite with the National Council.

The regular order being instituted, Paul M. Pearson, of Swarthmore College, and Bessie M. Camburn, of Mt. Clemens, Mich., spoke on "The Scope and Nature of the High-School Course in Public Speaking." C. R. Rounds, of West Division High School, Milwaukee, followed with an address on "The Relation of the High-School Course in Public Speaking to the Other English Studies." After some discussion, S. H. Clark, of the University of Chicago, presented a paper on "The Relation of the College Course in Public Speaking to the Other English Courses." This aroused a heated controversy concerning alleged dishonesty in interschool debating, the value to be placed upon Phillips' *Effective Speaking*, and kindred matters. The chief speakers were Professor Gough, R. D. Brackett, of Washington High School, Milwaukee, Mary E. Courtenay, of Englewood High School, Chicago, Professor Fulton, of Wesleyan University, and Mr. Kline, of the Columbia School of Expression, Chicago.

The program concluded with a brief description of "An Oral Test for College Entrance," by Elvira D. Cabell, of Chicago Teachers College.

#### THE ANNUAL DINNER

The annual dinner was preceded by a social hour in the Ladies' Parlor. One hundred and seventeen sat down at the tables in the North Banquet Room. President Scott as toastmaster introduced five

speakers, who had been hastily pressed into service on account of the sudden illness of Dean Sumner. Professor Franklin T. Baker presented a number of wrongs against which the teacher should protect him (her) self. Professor Vernon P. Squires read several absurd answers made by college students to questions involving knowledge of the Bible, and explained the North Dakota system of crediting Bible study done at home or in Sunday school. Miss Adelaide Steele Baylor, of Indianapolis, gave a series of flashlights upon the work of the Indiana Education Department for the schools of the state. Professor Robert I. Fulton told what the teachers of oral expression would bring to the Council, and President Stratton D. Brooks, of Oklahoma University, closed the program with a characteristic address full of pith and humor. The occasion was memorable and delightful.

#### GENERAL SESSION, SATURDAY FORENOON, NOVEMBER 30

The program of the general session of Saturday forenoon was devoted to reports of special committees of investigation. The first of these was presented by Edwin M. Hopkins, of the University of Kansas, chairman of the Committee on the Labor and Cost of English Teaching. He summed up the results of three years of inquiry as follows:

#### LABOR AND COST OF ENGLISH TEACHING

##### A.—*What is a day's work for an English Teacher?*

Figures here given are ascertained high-school averages stated in round numbers. For any particular school should be substituted the figures denoting conditions in that school.

In the following estimates it is assumed that one teacher teaches both literature and composition to several sections of the same class, one subject twice a week and the other three times, preparing but one subject each day; *and that complete efficiency is the end in view.*

Let  $p$  denote daily preparation (assumed = 1 hour),  $r$  the number of recitation hours daily,  $n$  the hours daily out of class devoted to written or oral exercises, and  $d$  the number of hours in a day's work. For convenience,  $x$  may denote daily hours of theme reading, and  $y$  the number of students assigned to a single teacher. Assume the equation  $p+r+n=d$ . If  $y=130$ , the ascertained average in high schools, and if the composition work is all written to secure highest efficiency, themes averaging 52,000 words weekly require for first reading 26 hours. One-third of these rewritten require for re-examination about 5 hours. Individual conferences, averaging 15 minutes, total weekly 32.5 hours. This is a total of 63.5 hours weekly, whence  $n=12.7$  hours. Hence, if  $p=1$  and  $r=5$ ,  $d=1+5+12.7=18.7$  hours. Further,  $x$  (the daily

theme reading) is 6 hours, which is three times the physical limit of efficiency. Note that conferences after theme reading have been experimentally shown to increase efficiency six and one-half times ( $59\% \div 9.2\%$ ).

If the composition work were all oral (see first special request below) present data indicate that one-half hour weekly is needed for individual drill with each pupil. If so,  $x=0$ , but  $n=13$  and  $d=19$ .

But expression teaching should be half oral and half written. If so, the written training alone would require daily 3 hours of theme reading ( $x=3$ ) and 3 hours of conference; and  $x=3$  is still 50 per cent above the physical limit of continued efficiency. It is probably easier to alternate written and oral training than to carry them on side by side; but in either case  $n$  is about 13 and  $d$  is about 19.

Values of  $d$  for decreasing values of  $y$ , with maintenance of efficiency:

If  $y=100$  and  $r=4$ ,  $n=10$  and  $d=15$ . If  $y=80$  and  $r=4$ ,  $n=8$  and  $d=13$ .

If  $y=60$  and  $r=3$ ,  $n=6$  and  $d=10$ . If  $y=50$  and  $r=2$ ,  $n=5$  and  $d=8$ .

The values of  $p$ ,  $r$ , and  $n$  of course vary widely under varying conditions; but existing data indicate that under no conditions reported can  $y$  ever exceed 80 if  $d$  is to remain a reasonable number, and efficiency be preserved.

When  $y=130$ , by what lessening of efficiency is  $d$  commonly decreased?

Sometimes by dividing  $d-p-r$  by 130 to find how much individual attention a teacher may give to a single pupil. If  $d$  be assumed  $=8$  and  $r=5$ , this will vary from zero to 1 minute a day; and the result is known as "skimming" or "sighting." Thus in oral work a pupil might have not to exceed five minutes a week of training out of class.

Sometimes in oral training by giving the pupil his five minutes' attention in recitation time only. This might mean one exercise in eight weeks.

Commonly, in written practice, by omitting all conferences and all re-writing. This decreases  $n$  from 13 to 5, and decreases efficiency in the ratio of 6.5 to 1; but  $d$  is still high (11 hours), and  $x$  (5 hours) is still  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times the physical limit.

Often, in written practice, by shortening themes, by neglecting part of them, by using student or other readers, or by omitting all theme reading except in class. The corresponding decrease in efficiency has not yet been accurately determined.

*Conclusion.*—If 8 hours is a fair day's work, and high efficiency is to be maintained under average conditions, the average number of pupils assigned to a single teacher should be not 130 but 50.

B.—*What does the teaching of English cost, in relation to other subjects?* (All figures subject to modification in final report.)

Relative average annual teaching cost for each pupil: English about \$7. Mathematics 10 per cent more. Latin 40 per cent more. German 25 per cent more. History about the same as English. Science twice as much.

Relative percentage of pupils in each subject: English 100, German

above 30, mathematics above 80, history about 65, Latin about 40, science about 50.

Relative total teaching cost of each subject, in percentages: English 100, German 37.5, mathematics 88, history 65, Latin 56, science 100.

Average number of pupils assigned to a teacher in each subject: English about 130, German 86, mathematics 115, history 130, Latin 96, science 77.

Ratio of annual cost of equipment, English (books) to science, one to ten.

Ratio, total annual cost of English pupil to science pupil, 100 to 220.

Ratio, total annual cost, English work to science work, 100 to 113.

In discussion Miss Jane C. Tunnell, of the Hyde Park High School, Chicago, speaking for the Chicago high-school teachers, urged that steps be taken to secure for the report the most complete publicity possible. She also offered the following suggestions for relieving the pressure of work upon teachers of English in the schools. Classes in English should be limited to twenty-five, never more than thirty, pupils; English teachers should have charge of not more than four classes reciting four times each per week; a sufficient sum of money should be set aside to supply the department of English with sets of books for supplementary reading as assigned in the course of study and to secure stereopticons, duplicators, and other labor-saving devices.

Edwin L. Miller, of the Central High School, Detroit, followed. He said:

Though we English teachers are face to face with difficulties that do not enter into the problems of those who give instruction in other subjects, I confess that, with respect to the situation as a whole, I am a chronic optimist. This is due partly to temperament, partly to environment (in Detroit, you know, life is worth living), and partly to Professor Hopkins' report.

To make definite suggestions in respect to such a matter as this report is a dangerous business. The individual who does so is apt to reap a whirlwind of unfriendly and entirely deserved criticism. For the good of the cause however, I am willing to venture a little. I will, therefore, suggest that this Council can do three things and ought to do them:

1. Thank Professor Hopkins and his committee and ask them to continue their work.

2. Go on record as demanding that no teacher of English shall be required to teach over four classes, and that the number of pupils in each of these classes shall not exceed 25.

3. Organize a committee to study the causes which make English teaching the heart-breaking task that it now is, and to suggest such remedies, aside from that embodied in the preceding paragraph, as may be proper.

I will take a few minutes to explain to you some of these problems and remedies as they appear to me, and will begin by telling you a story.

Last week I asked a class of ninth-graders to write me a fable about a Pike and a Minnow. One of them (a boy) produced this:

Once upon a time there was a Minnow who had been caught and used as bait by a farmer boy. As he hung at the end of a hook and line he said to himself, "I certainly am in a fix, but that is no reason why I should get other people [he meant fishes] into trouble?" So to every fish that came to bite the hook he would say, "Don't eat me or you will be sorry." After a while an old Pike came along. The Minnow said, "Don't eat me or you will be eaten." But the Pike thought he knew better and he swallowed the Minnow and the Hook too and was hauled up, cleaned, and the boys had him for dinner. Moral: Eat and be eaten; kill and be killed.

I am inclined to believe that it will be some fun to teach that boy Lamb's *Essays* and Burke's *Conciliation*. But what shall we say about the problem of teaching, in the same class with him, the girl who wrote the following fable, which she calls "Pike and the Mackerel"?

One day a mackerel was swimming near the shore. The Pike swam up to him, and said, "I see you are swimming on my premises again and for that act I shall punish you." Thereupon he ate up the mackerel.

On the same day the same girl, being asked to analyze the sentence, "Where is your hat," said: "*Where* is the subject, *is* the verb, and *hat* the object."

I submit these specimens to you as illustrations of the truth or falsity of the contention recently put forth by one of my colleagues in a periodical of wide circulation to the effect that our system of education is a failure. With regard to that assertion I wish simply to say this: that it seems to me that any institution must be judged ultimately in the light of its results. If our present system of education produces gentlemen and ladies who are sufficiently brilliant and learned to write as he has written and to command the audience which he evidently commands, it is fair to presume that that system cannot be characterized as completely a failure. I do not think that it is, but, still basing my conclusion on what he thinks and says, I am free to admit that the results which we now secure can probably be improved.

Professor Hopkins and his committee have done a piece of work that is undeniably useful. They have demonstrated scientifically that the teacher of English has too much work to do. The next step, it appears to me, is for us to attempt an analysis of the work that is actually done by teachers of English, in order to determine, if possible, just where the causes of the present situation are. Among these causes I think that I can discern the following:

1. There is a lack in the grammar school today, or in some grammar schools at least, of instruction in technical English grammar. This makes it necessary for this instruction to be supplied to a part of our pupils after they enter high school, and results in an unfortunate delay in getting at the work of instructing those who have been properly prepared. The time which can be devoted to the legitimate work of the high school is thus abbreviated. Don't misunderstand me when I say this. I take off my hat to the grammar school teachers of the country. What they accomplish in the face of the circumstances with

which they are confronted appears to me to be little short of marvelous, but the fact remains that English grammar does not everywhere receive, in the grades, the attention which is its due.

2. The second cause of our difficulties lies in the fact that the study of Latin is at present falling into disfavor and seems destined more and more to be discarded. When a student is taking Latin along with his English, and when that Latin is properly taught, he is really taking English twice a day instead of once. He is acquiring a sense for language. He is getting good drill in oral expression. The decadence of Latin in the high school, then, is rendering the problem of the English teacher constantly more difficult.

3. The lack in the modern home of real books is another cause of our difficulties. There is too much study of yellow journals and fifteen-cent magazines, which have the same relation to real literature as that department of *St. Nicholas* which is printed in large type and labeled, "For Very Little People." Along with this phenomenon there has come imperceptibly a change in the nature of our high-school population. While the nation during the last twenty-five years has doubled in population, the number of pupils in the high schools has increased at least fourfold. This means that there has come into the high schools a class of children who did not attend twenty-five years ago. They come from homes where there is not a background of several generations of culture. The consequence is that many things which could be taken for granted twenty-five years ago must now be laboriously taught. This is not a situation to complain of, but it is a situation to be reckoned with. It renders our problems more difficult. It makes our progress slower.

4. There is another obstacle in the lack of trained teachers. Once, in a class in Burke which I visited, I asked the pupils this question: "How many members did Burke propose that the colony of New York should send to the British Parliament?" Neither pupils nor teacher could answer it; indeed, in their groping through the speech, they had failed entirely to discover that Burke's main proposition is that none of the colonies shall send any members to Parliament, but that, instead, the colonial assemblies shall be recognized as being competent to grant money to the crown or refuse to grant it. It is no wonder that our great classics are unpopular among pupils when they are so misunderstood by teachers. I put teachers in the plural, because I suspect that the instance I have cited is not isolated. Therefore, before we discard Milton as "an old fogey," as I recently heard him called by a person who thought he was an English teacher, and before we substitute Billy Baxter for Addison, I suggest that we try the experiment of having the classics taught by teachers who really understand and love the classics, for nothing is truer of them than Wordsworth's lines,

You must love them ere to you  
They will seem worthy of your love.

Pupils will never appreciate them if teachers do not. Besides they are not outworn. *Hamlet* has more real significance today than *Man and Superman*.

Burke's analysis of the American character is much more searching and accurate than Arnold Bennett's. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* will be fresh, beautiful, and significant to live men and women, even if they are progressives, as long as there are sadness and gladness, mirth and sobriety, in human hearts. The present has its roots in the past, and he is a mighty poor botanist, a mighty poor farmer, and a mighty poor teacher who never thinks of roots but deems his task complete when he has inhaled the fragrance of the latest blossom.

5. Another difficulty (and this perhaps is the chief one) grows out of the nature of the subject-matter of what is called English. The material with which the English teacher has to reckon is vastly greater in quantity than that of any other department. This is a fact which I think cannot be too much emphasized and which, at the same time, has not heretofore received much attention. If you will compare what a teacher of history has to do with what a teacher of English has to do, I think that much of your wonder at the more or less unsatisfactory results obtained by the latter will be dissipated. Hold the history teacher who, in a year, has to teach the 572 pages of McLaughlin's *History of the United States* to students of eighteen, as closely and everlastingly responsible as you do the English teacher who has to teach 100 pages of grammar, 100 pages of composition, 850 pages of *David Copperfield*, 100 pages of *Julius Caesar*, 100 pages of Macaulay's *Lays*, and 25 pages of Lowell's poetry to pupils of fourteen, and what do you get? Why, the other day I asked a class of the former to elucidate for me the following sentence from Trevelyan's *History of the American Revolution* (Do you know the book? A grand book): "To him [George III] the capital of Massachusetts was a center of vulgar sedition, where the streets were strewn with brickbats and pieces of broken glass, where his enemies went about clad in homespun and his friends in tar and feathers." I asked them to tell me what is the capital of Massachusetts. Only one pupil (of course she was a girl) could answer. I asked her how she found out. She replied: "I was born at No. 4 Park Street, Boston, Mass."

The results attained by the history teacher are not known save in exceptional cases. Their pupils are not constantly examined concerning their knowledge of history, but the results secured by the teacher of English are forever in the limelight. All of our pupils use English in every one of their waking hours. When we make mistakes or fail to secure results, our defects are immediately perceived. I sometimes wonder what would be said about the results secured in other departments if they were subjected to the same searching scrutiny.

6. In the high schools of the country, almost without exception, there has prevailed and still prevails what I think might be characterized as "scrambled eggs" courses. What we call English, in other words, is a mixture of grammar, composition, literary history, ethics, aestheticism, elocution, debating, and dramatic art. It seems to me that the results secured in mathematics would probably fall far below what they are now if a similar system should prevail

in the instruction given in that subject. Why not, for instance, have a course in mathematics in which the subject of instruction on Monday would be arithmetic, on Tuesday algebra, on Wednesday geometry, on Thursday trigonometry, and on Friday bookkeeping? The result could hardly be more distracting than that now secured in the English department, when a teacher must give instruction on Monday in grammar, on Tuesday in composition, on Wednesday in public speaking, on Thursday in *Ivanhoe*, and on Friday in penmanship and spelling. Some economy and a somewhat greater efficiency could be secured, I think, if we should imitate the system which prevails in colleges, and subdivide our work, at least to the extent of separating composition from literature.

Just how to get at these problems, I am not prepared to assert. I would like to suggest, however, that it might be proper for this body to pass some resolutions looking toward study along the lines indicated, and, in order to put this matter before you in a rather definite form, I will propose the following:

*Resolved*, That the National Council of Teachers of English, admitting that the teaching of English in the United States today is susceptible of vast improvement, hereby directs its executive committee to appoint a committee to investigate the causes of this deficiency, to suggest remedies therefor, and to give to the results ascertained the widest possible publicity.

*Resolved further*, That the Council hereby extends to Professor Hopkins and his committee its thanks for the great contribution which, by their labors, they have made to the cause of English teaching.

The resolutions were adopted.

The second report was offered by Vincil C. Coulter, of the Warrensburg Normal School, on "Available Equipment for School and College English." Mr. Coulter had arranged an exhibit to accompany his paper, and he aroused great interest in the possibility of increasing efficiency by the use of labor-saving devices and by well-organized library and similar facilities. All of this may be done without raising the cost of English to the present level of several other subjects.

Professor Clapp pointed out the need of laboratory assistants in English, Mr. Crowe spoke of the need of a reflectoscope capable of projecting clearly a whole page of written composition upon the screen, and Miss Barbour explained a simple device for binding, by means of which good modern short stories, essays, etc., may be made available. Mr. Blaisdell presented a scheme for collecting clippings, and said that a good moving-picture lantern can now be had for \$85.

Ernest C. Noyes, of the Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh, Pa., then offered the preliminary report of the Committee on the Articulation of the Elementary Course in English with the Course in English in the High School. He stated that the purpose was to report conditions



as they actually exist and to offer suggestions for improvement. Through correspondence the members of the committee came to an agreement concerning a plan of work and compiled a questionnaire, which appeared in the *English Journal* of November, 1912. The inquiry was restricted to typical schools in typical communities, and the co-operation of teachers, principals, superintendents, and organizations of teachers was sought. Great care was taken to insure a favorable hearing but replies came in slowly. Nevertheless the investigation is apparently dealing with a vital problem upon which little work has been done. Keen interest has been aroused in many quarters, and, though the task will require time and labor, there is good prospect of rendering real service.

The committee made the following recommendations:

First, that the committee be continued with the understanding that as rapidly as certain well-defined facts and tendencies become apparent through answers received, these be made available through publication in the *English Journal*.

Second, that the committee be granted such funds as may be necessary to defray additional expenses for stationery, postage, and typewriting, not to exceed \$25 in all.

Third, that the members of the National Council lend their aid to the committee by themselves responding to its questions, by assisting to distribute these, and by using their influence to have the subject of articulation discussed at meetings of state and local associations of teachers.

On motion, the recommendations were referred to the Executive Committee.

The topic of articulation was discussed by Charles S. Thomas, of Newtonville, Mass., who stated that in the schools of that city a superior teacher of the eighth grade is assigned for a time to the first year of the high school. She then returns to the elementary school to carry on her work in the light of this added experience.

The fourth and last report was presented by James F. Hosis, of the Chicago Teachers College, on "Types of Organization of High-School English." This investigation also was unfinished, and hence only a tentative statement could be offered. It was clear that little attempt has been made to adapt the English course to individual communities. The study of a selected list of classics and the writing of themes based upon them constitute the bulk of the work in the majority of schools. The chief obstacles to success are the overloading of teachers and the crowding of the curriculum. Many complain also of the bad influence of home environment and of the lack of co-operation on the part of

other teachers. There is a growing tendency to base composition upon the pupils' experience apart from books and apparently also to separate the course in composition from the course in literature. A number of complete and well-organized courses have come to hand, and the time seems ripe for codifying the experience of leading schools of various kinds and for working out methods of studying the environment of pupils in order to organize courses well suited to the capacities and needs of the young people in particular schools. This is to be done by the National Committee on a Syllabus of English, which will use the material and have the co-operation of the National Council Committee on the High-School Course.

The report was discussed by Charles H. Judd, of the University of Chicago, who sharply criticized the present practice in teaching English. He declared that the large place which English occupies in the curriculum is accorded to it on the supposition that pupils will be taught to think, to speak, and to write in the vernacular. Instead of this, however, the time is devoted to the reading of masterpieces. The pupils do not discover that there is a literature of each trade or vocation, and they do not learn to read books of solid information. We must put more content into the English course.

The lateness of the hour precluded further discussion, and the chairman announced that the second annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English was concluded.